

Earth: Scrunched up and done away with or renewed and seriously upgraded?

SMALL GROUP NOTES

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Overview

On Sunday we looked in greater detail at the issue of the new earth. The big question was whether, when the word "new" is used (see Revelation 21:1 for an example), that means an utterly new thing, with no continuity with the old, or whether, in a similar vein to how the apostle Paul used the same word "new" in 2 Corinthians ch 5:17. That is, new in many ways, but still with physical, mental and social continuity with the person pre-conversion. The answer to that question really does have a huge impact on your present day attitude towards pretty much everything!

The argument was made that actually perhaps the more Biblically robust view is that of a renewed earth; radically healed and redeemed. That when Psalms says "the earth is the Lord's..." It is present tense, not past. He loves this earth. Satan has not won. The earth is not "broken beyond repair" but instead will be raised up, like our physical resurrection as Christians. At the centre of the plan for the new earth was a city like no other, where all of God's people would live for eternity in the glorious presence of Jesus.

Tom was keen to see two things achieved:

1. We would be convinced (mentally)
2. We would be captivated (with our emotions)

Scriptures

1 Peter 1:13, Revelation 21:1, Romans 8:22, 2 Peter 3:7/10
2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 8:22, 2 Peter 3:6, Psalm 24:1

John 5, Romans 8:19

Revelation 21:1-4, 10-12, 18-19, 21 25

Questions

1. What is your view on the big question – will earth be totally burnt up and destroyed or renewed and seriously upgraded?

2. What implications does each of these different viewpoints have on your everyday life?

Hint look to draw out application in as wide a range as possible (e.g. view of environment, physical bodies, sin, marriage, family life, singleness, personality, work place, emotions that trouble us, relationships and forgiveness, money, prayer, mission etc.

3. How can we grow in "preparing our minds for action" (2 Peter 1:13) with regards this? IE actually get this stuff in our minds during our normal everyday lives, so that it has impact? How can we as a small group live differently "Monday to Sunday" in light of this teaching.